

South/Central Sierra Nevada Noxious Weed Alliance
Steering Committee Meeting Notes
March 21, 2000

Attendees: Marty Acree, Yosemite National Park; Denis Griffin, CDFA; Carol Hafner, Fresno County Department of Agriculture; Toby Horst, Sierra Resource Conservation District; Wain Johnson, University of California, Mariposa; Donald Mayeda, Madera County; Ann Mendershausen, Mariposa RCD; Peggy Moore, U.S. Geological Survey, Yosemite Field Station; Fred Rinder, Fresno County Department of Agriculture; Terry Sandridge, SCE Forestry; Steve Schoenig, California Department of Food and Agriculture; Marianne Stump, Hume Lake District, Sequoia N.F.; Rosie Yacoub, Integrated Pest Control, CDFA, Sacramento

Agenda

1. Introductions
2. AB1168 funding
3. MOU
4. Brochure/web site
5. Action Plan
6. Yellow star-thistle mapping

Introductions: Marianne Stump of the Hume Lake District on the Sequoia National Forest sat in to observe our approach and get ideas on how she could be more involved with exotics work in her vicinity.

MOU: - Joanna Clines now has 9 out of 16 signature pages. The remainder should be submitted as soon as possible so the MOU can be finalized.

AB1168 Funding - Steve Schoenig: Funding became available from AB1168 in January, and it must be spent by the end of June. Seven weed management areas were chosen through a ranking process. They considered whether a Memorandum of Understanding was in place to establish the weed management area, resulting in 17 different weed management areas that were candidates. CDFA requested proposals from a subset of WMAs following a preproposal process. The AB1168 article has an advisory board representing several sectors, and there is an ad hoc group of Agricultural Commissioners. The board decided against spreading the funding in smaller amounts to all established WMAs with each getting approximately \$10,000. They didn't want to set \$10k as a precedent, and it was important to show results from the funding allocated. They wanted geographic representation, and funds were distributed to groups in NE California, Marin and Kern Counties. Several groups that received funds have funding from other sources, and they are all established groups with infrastructure, each in a position to spend funds effectively.

Funding for the next process is to begin with getting the advisory board together in early May. The \$200k from the state is to be leveraged for in-kind and matching funds. CDFA will focus on the 10 groups that didn't receive funds in the first round. However, funding being received by various WMAs totals \$2-3 million from various sources and these other sources should be viewed as our best prospects. Department of Conservation has \$120,000 that may be increased. Steve will start with email list to get information on available funding out to appropriate people. These sources include the Equip (sp?) Program and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

A new bill, AB1740, sponsored by the Regional Council of Rural Counties (Bob Pickard), has the same language as AB737. It includes \$10 million to CDFA for WMA support, \$8 m to County Agric. Comm for YST cooperative projects, \$1 m for other weeds. It is a one time, 1 year appropriation.

There is no indication that AB1168 will increase from \$200k back to \$500k.

Steve is planning a workshop for June 8 or 9 on everything a weed manager would need to know (except actual control methods), including GPS/GIS selection, appropriate scale for mapping, how to convert to a plan, compliance issues and monitoring. It will be for one day and will target people with WMAs who will be planning weed control. The day before there will be a hand-on GPS and ArcView demo. ESRI may provide ArcView to each WMA for a nominal fee of \$50 to \$100 along with offering training in the use of the program. The mapping information should be shared at the state level but would be retained at each county as well. The location will be the Hedrick Ag Center in Woodland. See the following web site for details: www.cdfa.ca.gov/wma.

Steve is working with the Western Weed Management group to coordinate and there is talk of national coordination on weed mapping that is tied to the Executive Order.

Brochure/Web site: CDFA will host a web page for each Weed Management Area by posting text for WMAs that have no other options. We could take advantage of this once Tim Prather leaves the area in August if the UC Kearney Agricultural Center is no longer an appropriate or accessible site. The Kearney site url is www.uckac.edu/weedbiology. We intend to post the MOU text there once all signatures are submitted. We can also post events the Alliance sponsored last year as well as upcoming events.

Regarding the brochure, Joanna still has donations coming in. She will be meeting with a Government Printing Office representative in Vallejo in early April to begin the design process. The Brochure Committee narrowed the list of species down to 10 at the 2/14 meeting. Wain Johnson has drafted some text for the layperson weed brochure and would like feedback on it. Peggy Moore will contact the Central Sierra Partnership Against Weeds to see if we can use some of their photographs.

Action Plan: Subcommittees were formed for the following components of the action plan:

I Funding

Toby Horst (chair), Terry Sandridge, Carol Hafner, Larry Ballew

II Strategic Planning/MOU

Steering Committee: Joanna Clines (USFS)(chair), Marty Acree (NPS), Tim Prather (UC), Toby Horst (RCD), Carol Hafner (Ag. Comm.), Wain Johnson (UC), Denis Griffin (CDFA), Peggy Moore (USGS), Kevin O'Connor or MaryAnn Griggs (DFG)

Charge: Compose strategic plan. There is a template available based on the Salmon River Weed Management Area.

III Mapping/Inventory

Tim Prather (chair), Ann Mendershausen, Wain Johnson, Denis Griffin, Carol Hafner, Don Mayeda

IV Education/Outreach

Wain Johnson (chair), Joanna Clines, Marianne Stump, RCD representative to be named

Yellow star-thistle mapping - Steve Schoenig: In recognition that YST is poised at the edge of national forests and parks in the Sierra Nevada, CDFA has established a program to map YST distribution to define the line between extensively invaded areas and where the species might be controllable and prevented from invading further. It has been found flowering at elevations of 7200' in the north (Donner Pass) and 8600' in the central Sierra (Tuolumne Meadows). Biological parameters indicate it could reproduce at up to 10,000' in some years. Its habitat is upland with open canopy, including annual grassland, woodland and open or cleared forest on various substrates. Steve intends to examine biological parameters in Idaho to begin to define its potential in this region.

In 1997, Mike Pitcairn mapped YST by township, noting presence/absence in a township if 3 mi of highway or 2 sections in a township were infested. This provided a coarse statewide picture of distribution. Steve is now refining the scale of the information, noting presence lines and collecting information on where it is not found.

In 1999 crews drove all of the state highways into the Sierra Nevada and recorded occurrence of YST. Steve is now providing a number of options for getting distribution/observation data into the GIS database, including notes on hard copy maps he is supplying and observation forms. CDFA will accept GPS data, GIS data or paper map data. Data collectors should not enter private land. Right-of-way access is ok and anything you can see from rights-of-way. Steve provided GIS printout maps of our 3 county area on which YST information can be recorded and submitted.

Announcements: Denis Griffin will be leading a three-day weed tour on CDFA target species (List A and B species) for training resources management county personnel to recognize target species. It will be for about 20 people and will be in June some time. The route will be through Mariposa County over Sonora Pass to Reno and then south to Lake Isabella and return to Fresno.

Direct questions regarding these notes to Peggy Moore at peggy_moore@usgs.gov, 209-379-1888 or Joanna Clines at jclines/r5_Sierra@fs.fed.us, 559-297-0706 x4938. Please send any updates to email addresses to Tim Prather at prather@uckac.edu